

HONORING DOMINIC PALUMBO FOR  
SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY**HON. ROSA L. DeLAURO**

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, November 15, 1999*

Ms. DeLAURO. Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to rise today to honor an exceptional member of the North Haven, Connecticut community and a good friend, Dom Palumbo. On Saturday, November 13, the North Haven High School honored Dom by inducting him into their Sports Hall of Fame.

Dom has been an outstanding contributor to the sports programs at North Haven High School as well as an invaluable member of our community. Throughout his time in North Haven, Dom has been incredibly generous with his time, devoting himself to young athletes and supporting the athletics department in innumerable ways. He contributed to the building of the North Haven High School locker room at Northford Pavilion and opened his home countless times to young athletes to celebrate victories and successes. From sponsoring youth baseball, midget football, and summer basketball teams to helping purchase weight room equipment to hiring a bus for players and spectators, Dom's contributions to the North Haven community and its youth will be felt for years to come. Dom's efforts have fostered a sense of teamwork and sportsmanship in hundreds of North Haven youths.

Dom's commitment to the residents of North Haven extends far beyond his involvement with the high school. Today, retired from the ceramic tile business he started, Dom is a member of the Board of Directors of the Quinipiac Council for Boy Scouts of America and will resign this year after a fifteen year tenure as the Secretary of the Democratic State Central Committee. He has served on the North Haven Democratic Town Committee for 32 years, the Planning & Zoning Commission for 29 years, and the Democratic State Central Committee for 25 years. Dom's commitment to his community has enhanced and enriched the lives of our children and families.

It is with great pride that I rise today to join with his wife Judy, his sons, Richard, Robert, Ronald, and Raymond, the North Haven High School, and the North Haven community as my dear friend, Dom Palumbo, is inducted into the North Haven High School Sports Hall of Fame as the 1999 Service Award Honoree. My sincere congratulations on this wonderful occasion.

MEDICARE, MEDICAID, AND SCHIP  
BALANCED BUDGET REFINEMENT ACT OF 1999

SPEECH OF

**HON. MICHAEL E. CAPUANO**

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, November 5, 1999*

Mr. CAPUANO. Mr. Speaker, this morning I voted for the Medicare Balanced Budget Refinement Act of 1999 (H.R. 3075) in an effort to address the issues associated with the Balanced Budget Act of 1997 (BBA). While this bill represents an important step toward addressing the serious pitfalls contained in the

BBA, I remain gravely concerned about sections of this bill and the overall ramifications this legislation will have on the financial problems affecting our nation's health care system.

In particular, I am concerned in the manner with which this bill was brought to the floor. This legislation was finished last night, leaving our side with just a few hours to review the legislation. Democrats were all but left out of the negotiations between the Ways and Means and Commerce Committee Republicans over this new package. Moreover, as the bill was placed on this month's calendar as a suspension bill, Members were stripped of their rights to offer amendments and were allowed only twenty minutes of debate time to present their views on this bill. This, my friends, is the wrong way to approach legislation that is so critical to the delivery of health care.

However, the Medicare Balanced Budget Refinement Act represents a modest downpayment towards stabilizing a health system that is in midst of a fiscal crisis. The BBA, was intended to reduce Medicare spending by \$115 billion over five years but, as the act's provisions have been implemented, the actual reduction in Medicare spending is nearly twice that amount—\$220 billion. Simply put, the BBA overshot its mark.

Already, the 1999 losses for Boston teaching hospitals have exceeded \$150 million with two-thirds of the state's hospitals losing money on operations. This bill would translate into only \$125 million being restored to the state's health care institutions. Hospitals in Massachusetts, even under the most optimistic scenarios, are expected to recover only 10% of the \$1.7 billion cut by the BBA. With respect to teaching hospitals, this bill provides a one-year freeze on Indirect Medical Education payments at FY2000 levels of 6.0%.

Passage of H.R. 3075 represents an important step towards providing critically needed BBA relief for such providers of health care as teaching hospitals, home health agencies, skilled nursing facilities, and therapy services. This represents a first-step in trying to confronting the consequences of the BBA and averting the impending fiscal crisis facing health care providers nationwide. I therefore voted for this bill and hope that Democratic concerns be addressed in Conference.

HONORING RELIANT ENERGY  
HL&P/ENTEX**HON. KEN BENTSEN**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, November 15, 1999*

Mr. BENTSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate Reliant Energy HL&P/Entex and its employees for selection by the Deer Park Chamber of Commerce as the 1999 Industry of the Year.

Reliant Energy and its employees have been responsible members of the Deer Park community for nearly 70 years, providing residents, businesses, and industries with safe and reliable energy services. The Texas Natural Resources Conservation Commission awarded the 1999 Texas Environmental Excellence Award in the large business category to Reliant Energy in recognition of the company's efforts to restore damaged wetlands along

Clear Creek. More than 200 entrants competed for the state's most prestigious environmental award, which honors Texas' best waste reduction and pollution prevention projects.

Reliant Energy was first organized in 1882 as Houston Electric Lighting & Power. It was reorganized and renamed Houston Lighting and Power Company in 1905. In 1999, Reliant Energy HL&P/Entex, a division of Reliant Energy, was formed, and is the electricity and natural gas provider for the Houston metropolitan area. As Reliant Energy HL&P/Entex, it is the 10th largest electric utility in the U.S. in terms of kilowatt-hour sales. It serves more than 1.6 million electricity customers over a 5,000 square mile area in and around Houston and more than 730,000 natural gas customers in the Houston area.

A true connection exists between Reliant Energy and the Deer Park community. More than 100 Reliant Energy HL&P/Entex employees make their homes in Deer Park neighborhoods. Demonstrating their generosity and connection to the community, the company's employees have logged more than 5,000 volunteer hours on projects in the Deer Park/Southeast Houston area.

Reliant Energy HL&P/Entex's active involvement in the Deer Park community can be traced through its participation in a wide variety of civic organizations, including the Deer Park Chamber of Commerce, Communities in School and several community-based non-profit organizations.

Reliant Energy HL&P/Entex has contributed to efforts to provide a first-rate education for the young people of Deer Park. Last year, the company was a major supporter of the Deer Park Independent School District, donating generously for educational materials, school presentations and teacher training.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate the employees of Reliant Energy HL&P/Entex on being named the Deer Park Chamber of Commerce 1999 Industry of the Year. This honor is well-deserved for their work in expanding business and job opportunities, establishing safer conditions for workers, and initiatives to protect the environment. This award indicates that Reliant Energy HL&P/Entex has demonstrated a commitment to strengthening community relations by supporting employees' volunteer activities and making contributions to deserving sectors of the community.

## TRIBUTE TO VETERANS

**HON. JENNIFER DUNN**

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, November 15, 1999*

Ms. DUNN. Mr. Speaker, President Calvin Coolidge once said, "The nation which forgets its defenders will be itself forgotten." Americans have not forgotten the veterans who risked their lives and, in many cases, sacrificed their health and goals for this great country.

The United States maintains its coveted position as the world's only remaining superpower because of the countless men and women who, throughout history, selflessly put themselves in harm's way to defend America's freedom across the globe.